

Alternative

Information

Record



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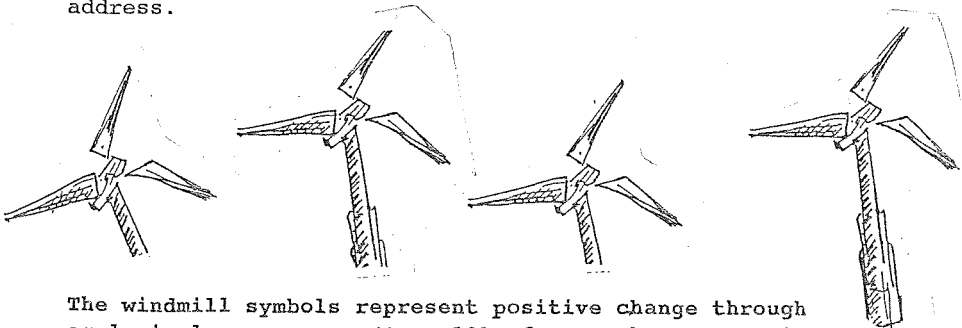
APRIL/  
MAY  
1992

AIRMAIL

We hope our readers like the recent design changes to AIR. Declan has bought a computer and is beginning to learn how to Desk Top Publish so hopefully future issues will look better still. Martyn has a new job and is still getting over nearly being clobbered by shelving and files which fell down at the War Resisters International office where he was volunteering. His experience leads him to advise that safety audits should be carried out every so often in workplaces to check that shelving and other things are safe and secure. Since peace movement organisations are so often underfunded they in particular should bear this in mind. Ironically, the most dangerous place many peace people may find themselves in is their own office.

This issue deals with ecological resources, particularly organisations and resources which are not so well known as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth etc.

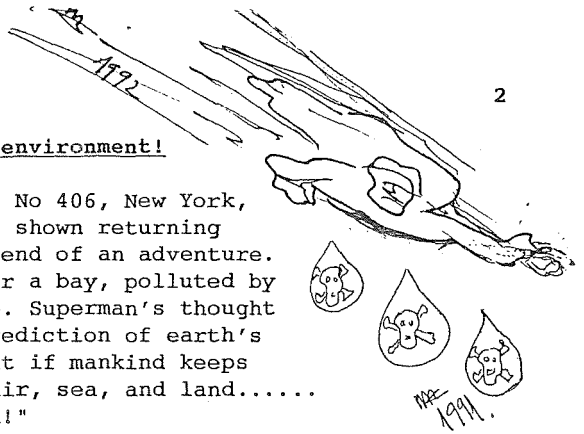
Plans for future issues are as follows: Air 10 - General issue; Air 11 - Third World and development resources; Air 12 - general issue; Air 13 - Children's resources. Anyone wishing to contribute pieces to any of these issues would be most welcome to do so. Send them to our c/o 6 Endsleigh Street address.



The windmill symbols represent positive change through ecological awareness. (Over 10% of Denmark's energy is produced by windpower).

Comic Hero fights for the environment!

Superman, DC Action Comics No 406, New York, November 1971. Superman is shown returning home to Metropolis at the end of an adventure. The Man of Steel flies over a bay, polluted by clouds of industrial smoke. Superman's thought bubble says "Van Tarr's prediction of earth's destruction was a hoax! But if mankind keeps spewing poisons into the air, sea, and land..... the world's doom is sealed!"



Martyn Lowe was inspired by this to co-place an advertisement in Peace News in the mid-1970s which read: "Superman may save planets but can he save the Ecosystem?". Now, fast forward to 1991 and the appearance of "Superman for Earth" by Roger Stern, Kerry Gammill, and Dennis Jake, with Tom McCraw. DC Comics, New York, 1991.

In this adventure Superman's girlfriend's concerns prompt him to investigate why Earth's environment is deteriorating so rapidly. He soon finds out that it is due to man's shortsighted greed - "Man is the only creature that fouls its own nest". Faced with his greatest challenge yet, Eco-Superman begins to take action. He exposes a US company trying to dump toxic waste, cleans up the junk from New York's Hudson river and fixes a leaking sewage pipe. He finds out that American paper mills still use dioxin-containing paper and prevents a protected area of the Amazon rainforest from being burnt. We even find Superman - Lois going to the bottle bank and recycling their newspapers, as well as debating whether it would be right to bring children into such an overcrowded world and deciding to sponsor a third world child instead.

After an apocalyptic vision of a future Earth so wrecked by pollution that only rats and cockroaches can survive, Superman addresses an International Congress on the Environment: "Life on planet earth is being threatened... we, ourselves, are the source of that threat. On virtually every level, from the economic to the spiritual, humanity has been squandering its inheritance. Our rainforests, the very lungs of our world, are being destroyed. Plants and animals are becoming extinct faster than they can be studied. We cannot even begin to calculate what we are losing every year... every day! We are, all of us, part of the problem... we must all be part of the solution".

Stirring stuff! Printed on 50% recycled paper and with an annotated list of 24 US environmental organisations at the back this would be a very good present for a child, teenager, or, indeed, many adults!.

**Martyn Lowe & Declan McHugh**

### Looking back

When I got involved with Greenpeace [London] in 1973 few people knew much about ecology. In those days we spent a lot of time showing the basic links between nuclear bomb-tests and the degradation of the environment. I started working on the issue of nuclear power in 1974, a time when there was very little literature on nuclear issues written in language which the lay-person could understand. Almost twenty years later we are faced with even worse ecological problems - more nuclear power stations for example.

It is more important than ever to work on the problems of nuclear contamination of the environment. I have seen nuclear power plants and I have seen modern windmills (the kind that produce electricity) in places like Denmark - the mess and the future.

**Martyn Lowe**

### RESOURCES

**A Selection of Some Lesser-known Ecojournals produced by National Eco-organisations**

- 1) 'Anti-Nuclear Network Newsletter'.  
c/o 265 Seven Sisters Road  
London N.4.  
England.

The A.N.N does a lot of excellent work on nuclear waste transport.

- 2) 'Earth First! - Action Update (UK)'.  
 c/o Lea Valley Earth First!  
 PO Box 2573  
 London N16 6HN.  
 England.

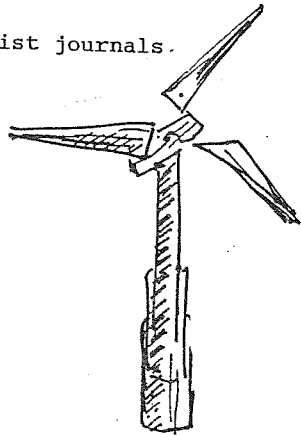


The activist journal of the UK arm of the US organisation Earth First! This organisation is best known for its tree-saving actions but has now moved on to an anti-car campaign.

- 3) 'Green Line'.  
 34 Cowley Road  
 Oxford 4.  
 England.

One of the oldest of the British Eco-activist journals.

- 4) 'Safe Energy'.  
 SCRAM  
 11 Forth Street  
 Edinburgh 1.  
 Scotland.



The journal of the Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace. This periodical covers all aspects of energy production, nuclear power and alternative energy.

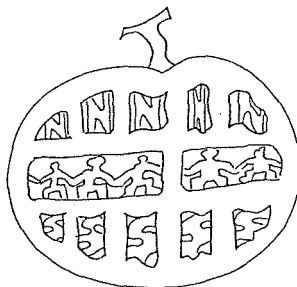
- 5) 'WALK'.  
 1 Wandsworth Road.  
 London SW8.  
 England.



The Journal of the Pedestrian Association.

- 6) 'The Vegan'.  
33-35 George Street,  
Oxford 1.  
England.

'The Vegan' is the journal of the Vegan Society. It covers issues such as Animal Rights, the politics and practicalities of soil use and food production, recipes, health matters plus news items. The book reviews are a good source for activists and librarians too.



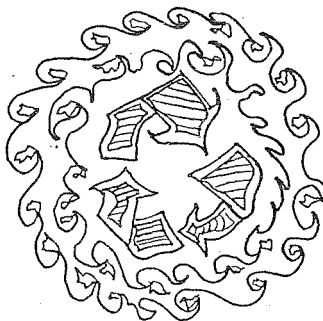
Prices and subscription costs have not been listed for the above journals because they can change quickly in inflationary times. I find all these journals useful and enjoyable - I even spend money on them which is the highest recommendation I can give!

Martyn Lowe

### Other Resources

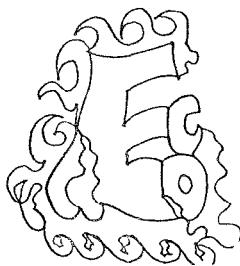
#### Shops

'World of Difference'.  
London Ecology Centre  
21 Endell Street,  
London WC2H 9BJ,  
England.  
Tel: 071-379 8208  
Hours: Monday-Saturday 10-7pm.



This Green Technology shop sells low-energy lightbulbs; sun and wind energy sources; non-toxic paints; a full range of recycled papers; a 'green computer'; Traidcraft goods (Traidcraft are a company which gives third world people a chance to sell their goods to the first world and get a fair price for them); books and magazines.

Intermediate Technology Bookshop  
 103-105 Southampton Row  
 London WC1,  
 England.  
 Tel: 071 436 9761.  
 Hours: Monday-Friday 9.30-6pm.  
 Saturday 11-6pm.



Free catalogue from Unit 25, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset  
 SP7 8PL.

This is the publishing house for the Intermediate Technology Development Group which adopts the Schumacher perspective (See 'Thoughts for the Issue'). They have books on practical issues such as electricity generators and water pumps for small-scale rural development, as well as green thinking, third world development, and a small fiction and biography section.

Declan McHugh

#### BOOKS

'Decade of Destruction' by Adrian Cowell, Hodder and Stoughton, 1991.

This book is a personal account of the Author's involvement with the people and ecology of the Amazon.

'Earthscan Action Handbook' by Miles Litvinoff, Earthscan, 1991.

Earthscan books are well-researched and designed. This one demonstrates that environmental and developmental issues are intimately linked.

'Environmental hazards of war; releasing dangerous forces in an industrialised world' edited by Arthur H. Westing, Sage publications, 1991. 96pp.

Academic treatment of a relatively little-tackled but increasingly important subject - especially in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War.

# Peace News

TAKE  
ANOTHER  
LOOK



TAKE  
PEACE  
NEWS

### Miscellaneous

#### Keesings Contemporary Archives.

Keesings contains useful concise reports and tables on environmental developments.

Declan McHugh

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

Anil Agarwal is the Director of the Centre for Science and Environment situated in New Delhi, India. I met Anil at a conference in London and was most impressed with the work he is doing. The CSE is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation aiming to "create informed public opinion about the need for rational, equitable and sustainable management of natural resources".

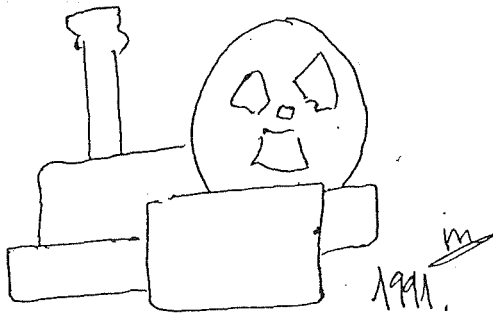
What I find particularly exciting about CSE and Anil's work is that the emphasis is on the practical - going out into local communities, tapping the local peoples knowledge and skills and empowering people to help themselves. Anil's vision draws upon the work of people such as Mahatma Gandhi in its belief in the power of participatory democracy and, equally, that the "deadweight of officialdom" stifles progress in tackling and conquering the many urgent and increasing problems of a vast but poor country with one seventh of all the millions of people in the world.

The examples of people power that have already been achieved are inspiring. "People are a society's biggest resource and once properly organised and mobilised, they can manage many things which armies of bureaucrats and power-brokering politicians can't". The CSE publishes reports eg a series of reports on the state of India's environment, a 160 page paperback "Fight for Survival - People's Action for Environment", and a recent publication "Towards Green Villages; a Strategy for environmentally-sound and participatory rural development". CSE hope to publish a fortnightly news magazine in science, environment and development.

Centre for Science and Environment  
F-6, Kailash Colony, New Delhi, India 110 048.  
Tel: 6438109/6433394.

Declan McHugh





Selective bibliography of novels on nuclear power disasters.

Many people just don't want to read non-fiction books that tell about the dangers of nuclear power yet will read novels. Here, for both readers and educators, is a short and selective bibliography of nuclear power disaster fiction.

1) Kyle, Ray. "Meltdown". David McKay Company Inc, USA, 1976. Also Granada Publishing Ltd. St. Albans, Herts, England, 1978. ISBN: 0-586-04789-1.

2) Scortia, Thomas N. & Robinson, Frank M. "The Prometheus Crisis". Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 1976. Also Pan Books Ltd, 1977. ISBN: 0-330-25330-1.

3) Ziemann, Hans Heinrich. "The Explosion". Fritz Molden Verlag, Vienna, 1978. Also New English Library, London, 1978. ISBN: 0-450-04323-1.

4) Huff, Lawrence. "Dome". Pocket Books, USA, 1979. Also New English Library/Times Mirror, London, 1980. ISBN: 0-450-04781-4.

5) Pohl, Federick. "Chernobyl". Bantam Books, London, 1977. ISBN: 0-533-17502-5.  
This book is based on the Russian reactor disaster of April 1986.

6) Woodford, Peggy. "Monster in our Midst". MacMillan Children's Books, London, 1988. ISBN: 0-333-47442-2.  
A novel for teenagers.

7) Rubinstein, Robert E. "When Sirens Scream". Putnam, 1981. ISBN: 0-396-07937-7.  
"Living next to a nuclear power plant is no big deal - until there is an accident". This book is for teenagers.

Martyn Lowe (and Declan McHugh for No. 7)

Thoughts for the Issue

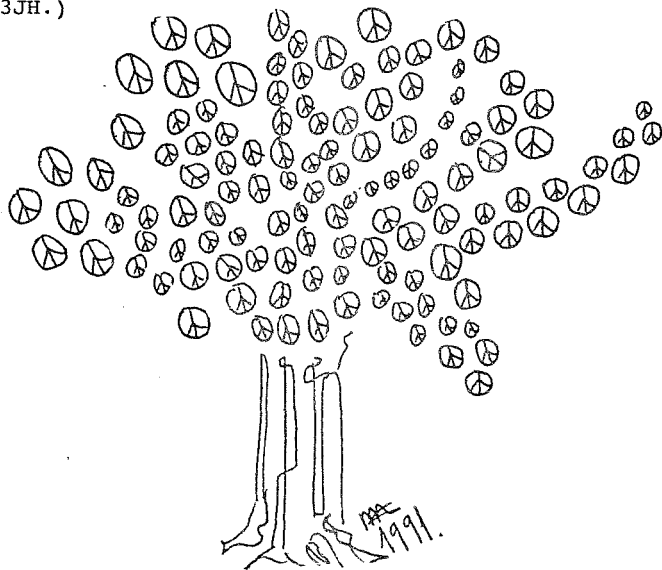
"The principle defect of the industrial way of life with its ethos of expansion is that it is not sustainable.. Radical change is both necessary and inevitable because the present increases in human numbers and per capita consumption, by disrupting ecosystems and depleting resources, are undermining the very foundations of survival". [1]

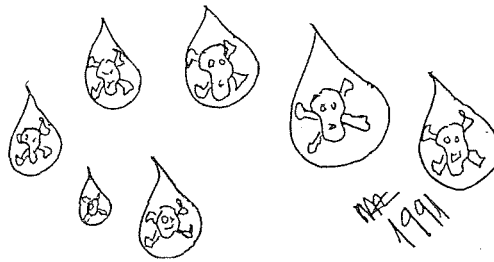
"There has never been a time, in any society in any part of the world, without its sages and teachers to challenge materialism and plead for a different order of priorities... Today, however, this message reaches us not solely from the sages and saints but from the actual course of physical events. It speaks to us in the language of terrorism, genocide, breakdown, pollution, exhaustion". [2]

[1] - E. Goldsmith, R. Allen, M. Allaby, J. Davoli, and S. Lawrence in "A Blueprint for Survival" a special issue of *The Ecologist*, January 1972, p.2.

[2] - E. Schumacher, "Small is beautiful", Sphere, London, 1974, pp 122-123.

Both quotes from "Point of no return", a piece in 'The Gadfly', the Ipswich Resource Centre Newsletter (available from Friends Meeting House, 39 Fonnereau Road, Ipswich IP1 3JH.)





### Facts Food

Deforestation is proceeding at a frightening rate across the globe:

In Latin America by 0.9% every year.  
in Africa by 1.7% every year.  
in Asia by 1.4% every year.

Data from the Brazilian Satellite Research Institute indicates that 8% of the total Amazon forests have been wiped out so far...

(Keesings Contemporary Archives, Vol 35 No.5, 1991.)

In Western Europe France and the UK are the largest waste importers. Less than 25% of waste legally imported into the UK was incinerated - the rest was dumped on landfill sites. The British government is planning to increase the UK capacity to deal with toxic waste from 83,000 tonnes to 500,000 tonnes. (Greenpeace Report in Feb 1991 on the exporting and importing of toxic waste by industrialised countries.)

Since 1900 the US has been responsible for nearly one third of the total quantity of carbon dioxide (which contributes to the Greenhouse Effect) emitted into the atmosphere. (India's Economic Times, 24 March 1991)

Declan McHugh

### The Good, The Bad, and the Idiotic...

This is Olive Trotter, a twenty-five year old librarian who yearns to be a novelist. She has lived a sheltered life, preferring books and obscure feminist issues, such as the Bavarian Women's Support Group - Islington Branch, of which she is Vice Chairperson, to men, parties and clothes. (Fiesta, Feb 1992, volume 26, No. 2)  
[Editors note - this was passed on to us!]



[Peter] Sellers considered his role as the randy librarian in 'Only Two Can Play' one of his favourites (Daily Mirror, 1/2/1992).

Like those soft-core movies whose plots unfold in a dimly lit corner of a public library (non-fiction section) one sees the camera panning from the lady librarian's desktop up to her crisp white Quaker collar and sensible glasses - and then slowly down to reveal, beneath the desk, fishnet stockings, stiletto heels and a split skirt (Matthew Parris, Underground ad for The Times)

Emma Thompson turned up looking like a politically correct librarian (Ann Leslie on 'Did You See', BBC2 Feb 1992).

In the 1980s, after some public agitation by a Newcastle librarian, the National Radiological Protection Board concluded that up to half of the 30 or so deaths that might over the years have resulted from the fall-out from the Windscale fire would have been due to this radioactive isotope [Polonium-210]. (New Scientist, 7/1/1988).

[The Khmer Rouge] razed temples, killed intellectuals and destroyed books. Histories and literature spanning centuries were dumped into rivers and scattered in the streets. 40 of the 43 staff members at the National Library in Phnom Penh were murdered, and the delicate neoclassical building...was turned into a pigsty. Many Cambodians want to hold on to their history, and now a new generation sits at the National Library's long tables and browses through the restored stacks, where it can learn what the Khmer Rouge hoped to erase. Documents are still at risk, and years of work are needed to restore the nation's libraries and culture. "When you see what has happened in Cambodia, you realize how much of a culture depends on its libraries and archives," says Dean [Cornell university's Director of preservation]. "These materials are the guts of the culture. They are vital for the rebuilding of the country".  
(Time, 24/2/1992)



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 Europe and World-wide Surface Mail - £12.00



NOTE All cheques to be made payable  
to 'LWPM', NOT to AIR.

AIR is the journal of:  
 Librarians Within the Peace Movement.

Write to us at  
 c/o 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1, England.

AIR 9 was written and edited by Declan McHugh and Martyn Lowe.  
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 except where otherwise credited.

